

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 375 112

SP 035 489

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TITLE Our Graduates Have Gone--What Place Now for the School of Education?
PUB DATE Jul 94
NOTE 9p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Teacher Education Association (24th, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, July 3-6, 1994).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Beginning Teacher Induction; *College School Cooperation; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; Inservice Teacher Education; *Partnerships in Education; Program Development; *School Role; *Schools of Education; Teacher Certification
IDENTIFIERS *University of Waikato (New Zealand)

ABSTRACT

In 1989, New Zealand abolished the inspectorate that evaluated beginning teachers and made recommendations for certification. Schools were made responsible for the process of induction and recommendation of teachers for registration as certified teachers. The School of Education of New Zealand's University of Waikato developed a partnership with area schools to help them implement this new task. Schools identified three areas of need for the School of Education: support for beginning teachers by enabling them to meet together and share their ideas, needs, and information; support for tutor teachers; and support for the principal and school through visits and assistance in providing another perspective where required. Programs have been developed for beginning teachers focusing on classroom management and organization, planning, behavior management of disruptive children, and subject content. Programs for tutor teachers have made them aware of their legal obligations in respect to the process of registration and have assisted them in developing advisory and guidance skills for their role. The School of Education has arranged visits to principals, tutors, and beginning teachers, with no official or evaluative role. The program is felt to be a positive step to ensure that the links between pre-service and in-service teacher development are established and maintained. (JDD)

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Our Graduates have Gone - What Place Now for the School of Education?

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**Paper presented at the Australian Teacher Education Association
Conference,
Queensland University of Technology Brisbane, 3 - 6 July, 1994.**

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Abstract

This paper gives an account of the way in which the University of Waikato, School of Education has addressed the issue of supporting their graduates as they enter the teaching profession.

The paper outlines the way in which the partnership between schools and the School of Education has been developed to give support and guidance to beginning teachers as they progress through to registration over a period of two years. The way in which a regional structure has been developed is outlined as is the programme presented. The guidance and assistance provided for tutor teachers (an experienced teacher with whom the beginning teacher is paired for professional guidance and advice) as they undertake their role in the process of induction is outlined and discussed.

Finally the paper raises issues including the place of the School of Education in the registration process, the selection of tutor teachers and the skills required by them and the changed role of the principal in the process.

Background

In October 1989, the world changed as far as many teachers in New Zealand are concerned. That day was the day that the reforms in administration entered their implementation stage and it was the day that many of the structures which had been in place were demolished. These structures were ones that had been built up over a number of years and although they were not perfect, they were well established and accepted.

The effects of the 1989 reforms of administration throughout the New Zealand education system have been varied and have been felt in many ways. The effect of the changed situation has been felt by schools with Beginning Teachers and in order to understand these changes, it is necessary to outline the previous situation.

Prior to October, 1989 the process of certification, as it was then called, was the responsibility of the Department of Education. Officers of the Department of Education, as members of the Inspectorate, had the field responsibility for the process with the District Senior Inspector in each Education Board area being the signatory for certification. The task of each area inspector was that of monitoring the process of certification and then to make recommendations as to whether a Beginning Teacher should or should not be certificated. The way in which this was

done was through regular visiting by the inspector who was able to gather the necessary information in order to make a recommendation for certification. The responsibility for the ongoing training of the Beginning teacher was with the school, yet in effect they did not make a final decision although in practice there was consultation. The tone of the relationship is exemplified in the manual then used by Principals, *School Administration, A Guide for Primary and Intermediate Principals* (1981), when it says

"In most districts the District Senior Inspector issues notes on the training and guidance of Year 1 teachers, but the principal can discuss any particular problems with one of the inspectors."

This is not to say that there was an unhappy relationship between schools and the inspectorate when considering beginning teachers. In fact, the opposite was the case. The fact that the inspectorate disappeared in 1989 left a void which has proven difficult to fill. In the role of inspector there was the opportunity to develop a wide pastoral role with the "basket" of information not being limited to one school. Inspectors were responsible for a number of Beginning Teachers and were able to share, support, encourage and sometimes motivate from a wide perspective. This strength has proven to be extremely difficult to replace.

Introduction

The beginning of 1990 found a situation from which the existing structures had been removed. The School of Education had previously taken no part in the in service development of Beginning Teachers and held no mandate to do so. However, schools found that the void created by the loss of the inspectorate created a situation of some discomfort. The new situation required the schools to be completely responsible for the process in induction and registration. They had no third party and had to address the situation within their own resources. This was a situation which many schools found difficult to come to grips with, particularly as they struggled to come to grips with "self management." Self management is a term which has become much used and is treated with some cynicism by many in schools. When it is to the advantage of a particular party to have the benefits of self management as they are perceived, then it is considered favourably. When parties such as schools seek the support either with resources or favourable decisions of

other parties, then self management is not seen to be as favourable. This is the situation that schools found themselves in as regard to certification. All was well while the process was without difficulty but when they needed additional support of confirmation of decisions it was difficult to make any contact.

Schools now have the responsibility for recommending full registration. They do this to an independent body known as the Teacher Registration Board. It is they who actually grant full registration but the decision to do so is based on the involvement of the school.

In schools now, the process is one which basically involves three parties - the Beginning Teacher, the Tutor Teacher and the Principal. The Beginning Teacher is required to meet the requirements for Registration through a period of two years. The requirements are stated by the Teacher Registration Board, "During the sixth term of this programme, or earlier if there are special circumstances, the school or kindergarten may recommend to the Teacher Registration Board that the teacher be fully registered. This recommendation would be supported by a statement from the principal indicating:

- a) advice and guidance had been provided.
- b) that the person had satisfactorily completed an uninterrupted period of employment as a teacher of two years, (or shorter period if approved by the Teacher Registration Board), and
- c) is a satisfactory teacher.

1991 and Beyond for the School of Education

As the new situation of 1990 and beyond unfolded, the School of Education began to take a more active role in the registration process. Schools indicated that they wished this to be so. Initially, the School provided an opportunity for schools to participate in a scheme which involved them in paying into a fund which provided

for two experienced teachers to visit the schools and support the Beginning and Tutor Teachers. At this stage, schools were still very much in the mentality of thinking that resources should be provided for them and hence there was resistance to the scheme and few schools participated.

In 1991, perhaps chastened by the response of schools to the previous scheme, the School of Education began to develop what is now felt to be a balanced situation. What has developed has been very much based on a partnership. Schools have indicated through a range of forums, that they see three areas of need for the School of Education to consider in its support role.

1. The provision of support for Beginning Teachers by enabling them to meet together and share their own ideas, needs and information.
2. The need to support Tutor Teachers in their work, and
3. The need to support the Principal and school through the maintenance of a linkage with visits and assistance in providing another perspective where required.

The response has been to establish a region wide network which enables schools to choose whether to and determine the extent of their participation. In a number of regional centres meetings are held for both Beginning Teachers and for Tutor Teachers.

The programmes for Beginning Teachers are developed in a way which is based on a combination of the needs as seen by the coordinators of each group and the Beginning Teachers themselves. Typical of elements of the programmes are topics such as classroom management and organisation, planning, behaviour management of children who are disruptive, the "core" curriculum subject areas such as Mathematics, Reading and Language. They also participate in sessions on subjects which focus on some of the "lesser" subject areas such as Art, Music and Physical Education. In each situation the emphasis has been on obtaining the highest quality input for the Beginning Teachers and this has been largely done

with contributions from practising teachers and from the vTeacher Support Services through Advisers to Schools. In 1994 the Beginning Teachers have responded well to these programmes and attend with real enthusiasm.

The programmes for Tutor Teachers have taken two thrusts. The first is to make the Tutor Teachers aware of their legal obligations in respect to the process of registration. The second is that of providing the Tutor Teachers with the necessary skills and abilities for their role. The role of the Tutor Teacher is to provide advice and guidance for the Beginning Teacher. It is an unpaid role and in many cases is in addition to duties of responsibility in other aspects of school organisation. Often the Tutor Teacher is selected on the basis of being the only person available for the task. Some Tutor Teachers feel inadequate for the role and some of the input has been focussed on providing opportunities for them to increase their ability to cope in a variety of situations. Feedback has indicated that this approach has been successful and Tutor Teachers are continuing to seek further opportunity to increase their skills and abilities.

The third aspect which has been responded to is that of visiting schools. This is the most difficult of the three aspects and is one which has been approached with caution. In 1993 and 1994 two teachers and one School of Education staff member have made contact with schools who have Beginning Teachers. Visits have been arranged to enable contact with the principal, tutor and beginning teachers. These visits are contact points and do not have any official or evaluative role. They have been warmly received in most cases and suggest a cementing of the continuing role for the School of Education.

Issues:

With the involvement of the School of Education in an area which is basically the responsibility of each school, a number of issues arise. The first of these is whether there is a need for the School to have involvement at all. The traditional view would have been that once students left their place of training, that would be the end of the matter. For two reasons, it is appropriate for there to be a continuing role.

First, the clear indication from schools is that they see the School of Education having a role in the continuing development of their graduate teachers. At least this

is so for the period of two year registration, but more and more, the wider role of school and teacher development needs to be continued.

The second justification is that of monitoring the quality of the training of graduates. While this aspect has been handled by the School as a whole through in depth questionnaires, the regionally developed programmes have served to assist this function. The sessions provide a forum for feedback and this is apparent on many occasions. The School clearly has a role in the continuing development of their graduates, but it is a support role only and is one which needs to be mindful of the responsibility being with the schools themselves. The School has not chosen and has no mandate to choose, any other role especially one which could be construed as being evaluative.

The second issue is that of the nature and provision of programmes for beginning and tutor teachers. The aim has been to coordinate the needs and provide input. This approach has been successful and has led to an enhanced view of the School of Education. Principals have made consistent comment on this aspect and continue to support the approach. Comments such as those supporting the regularity of contact to provide for the vacuum in linkage between principals, tutor teachers and beginning teachers are frequent.

The third issue which has become significant is that of the role of the principal. The registration process requires the principal to be a signatory to the request for final registration. This happens but there is a noticeable absence in some schools of the link between principal, tutor teacher and beginning teacher. What many principals are finding is that the demands of the self managing school make them less available for the day to day contact with beginning teachers and tutor teachers. Some find this a concern and have taken steps to alleviate the situation. They make regular contact through classroom visits and meeting with the tutor teacher and beginning teacher. However, there are schools where there is isolation felt by those involved in the process and there are indications that the ways in which some schools have addressed the difficulty could be adopted by all schools with beginning teachers.

The School of Education has taken a positive step to ensure that the links between pre - service and in - service teacher development are established and maintained. A cautious, but successful approach to develop an ongoing partnership is developing with schools throughout the region served by the University of Waikato, School of Education.

References:

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